

# Advertising and Marketing Guidelines Managed Behavioral Health Organization Accreditation



## Introduction

Congratulations on earning NCQA Accreditation, Certification, Recognition, Distinction or other NCQA status! We encourage you to publicize your achievement and have developed the following Marketing and Advertising Guidelines to help you get the most out of your NCQA status. The guidelines include how to market your achievement, appropriate language to incorporate into your marketing and advertising materials and helpful ideas to get you started.

The guidelines are designed to help NCQA customers to create advertising and marketing materials that reference NCQA status in a clear, factual and accurate manner. They are also designed to protect the integrity of NCQA's programs and allow all participants to benefit from their achievement in a fair and accurate manner.

The guidelines below are to be used in conjunction with NCQA's Guidelines for Advertising and Marketing ([www.ncqa.org/NCQAGuidelines](http://www.ncqa.org/NCQAGuidelines)).

## Descriptions of Managed Behavioral Health Organization Accreditation

The following statements may be used in your marketing and advertising material:

- NCQA MBHO Accreditation is a nationally recognized evaluation that purchasers, regulators, and consumers can use to assess MBHOs. NCQA MBHO Accreditation evaluates how well a health plan manages all parts of its delivery system—physicians, hospitals, other providers and administrative services—in order to continuously improve health care for its members.
- NCQA MBHO Accreditation is a voluntary review process.
- NCQA reviews include rigorous on-site and off-site evaluations conducted by a team of physicians and managed care experts. A national oversight committee of physicians and behavioral health providers analyzes the team's findings and assigns an accreditation level based on the MBHO's performance compared to NCQA standards.
- NCQA Health Plan Accreditation surveys include rigorous on-site and off-site evaluations of over 60 standards and selected HEDIS® measures. A team of physicians and health plan experts conducts accreditation surveys. A national oversight committee of physicians analyzes the team's findings and assigns an accreditation level based on the performance of each plan being evaluated to NCQA's standards.
- NCQA sends a team of trained health care experts, including physicians, to conduct a rigorous on-site survey of the health plan. (Please note this statement is not applicable to organizations' undergoing the Interim Evaluation Option) NCQA uses information from health plan records, consumer surveys, interviews with plan staff and performance on selected HEDIS® measures.

## Descriptions of Managed Behavioral Health Organization Accreditation Standards

The following statements may be used in your marketing and advertising material:

- NCQA MBHO Accreditation standards are developed with input from employers, health plans, state and federal regulators, MBHOs and other experts and are demanding.

- NCQA MBHO Accreditation standards are purposely set high to encourage MBHOs to continuously enhance their quality.
- NCQA MBHO Accreditation standards are intended to help organizations achieve the highest level of performance possible, reduce patient risk for untoward outcomes, and create an environment of continuous improvement.
- There are approximately 60 standards for quality included in the following categories:
  - Quality Management and Improvement
  - Utilization Management
  - Credentialing and Recredentialing
  - Members' Rights and Responsibilities
  - Preventive Behavioral Health Care Services

## Managed Behavioral Health Organization Accreditation Levels

**Full Accreditation** is granted for a period of three years to those plans that have excellent programs for continuous quality improvement and meet NCQA's rigorous standards.

**One-Year Accreditation** is granted to plans that have well-established quality improvement programs and meet most NCQA standards. (NCQA provides the plans with a specific list of recommendations, and reviews the plans again after one year to determine if they have progressed enough to move up to Full Accreditation.)

## Use of Managed Behavioral Health Organization Accreditation Seals

NCQA encourages organizations that have received Managed Behavioral Health Organization Accreditation to display their seals in marketing and advertising materials.

- Managed Behavioral Health Organization Accreditation consists of two levels, each with a separate and distinct seal.
  - Full Accreditation
  - One-Year Accreditation
- Organizations can only display the seal that corresponds to the level of Accreditation they have been awarded.
- You may access the seals at [www.ncqa.org/seals](http://www.ncqa.org/seals).
- Seals are provided in EPS and JPEG formats.
- Organizations should be aware that Accreditation statuses can change which may affect the statement on durable goods (e.g.: a billboard that is no longer accurate will have to be corrected). It is the organization's responsibility to maintain and update accurate marketing materials. Should your status change, you are responsible for updating all promotional items, and must cease distribution of all materials with incorrect status information. Updating of website and other distributed materials should take place within 30 days of the status change.

---

## Approved Quotes

Organizations earning MBHO “Accreditation” can use the following quote from Margaret E. O’Kane, President, in their marketing material.

---

“\_\_\_\_\_’s MBHO Accreditation is proof that it’s an organization which works hard to coordinate care, provide access and good customer support for members,” said Margaret E. O’Kane, NCQA President, “It’s a sign that \_\_\_\_\_ is focused on improving the behavioral health of its members.”

---

## How to Describe Your NCQA Status in a Press Release

All of the preceding rules apply to press releases.

Organizations are welcome to create their own press releases mentioning their NCQA status. The press release must include a description of the Managed Behavioral Health Organization Accreditation and the NCQA boiler plate:

---

*NCQA is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health care organizations. It also recognizes clinicians and practices in key areas of performance. NCQA’s Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is the most widely used performance measurement tool in health care. NCQA’s website ([ncqa.org](http://ncqa.org)) contains information to help consumers, employers and others make more-informed health care choices. NCQA can be found online at [ncqa.org](http://ncqa.org), on Twitter [@ncqa](https://twitter.com/ncqa), on Facebook at [facebook.com/NCQA.org](https://facebook.com/NCQA.org) and on LinkedIn at [linkedin.com/company/ncqa](https://linkedin.com/company/ncqa).*

---

Submit questions related to press releases through [My NCQA](#).

## Compliance

It is the responsibility of the organization to follow and conform to all applicable NCQA Marketing and Advertising Guidelines. The information referencing your NCQA status or product must be accurate and not misleading. Only the organization that obtained the NCQA status can advertise such status and use the corresponding seal. The organizations’ affiliates, including delegated entities, contractors and partners, are not allowed to use the NCQA status and seal. Failure to comply with these guidelines may jeopardize the organization’s NCQA status.

In addition, NCQA will conduct periodic audits of customers’ marketing and advertising materials at any time to ensure that marketing materials are true, not misleading, and that the organization’s NCQA status is represented correctly. Failure to participate in the NCQA audit or refuse to comply with NCQA’s request to address inaccuracies in information related to NCQA, NCQA status and/or product in your marketing and/or advertising materials constitutes a violation of NCQA’s advertising guidelines and may result in, at NCQA’s discretion, a revocation of an organization’s NCQA status(es).

Organizations must maintain all copies of their marketing and advertising materials referencing NCQA status(es) and/or product(s) released or used in the past six months.

NCQA reserves the right to require an organization to withdraw their advertising materials from distribution immediately or to publish, at the organization’s cost, a retraction and/or clarification in connection with any false or misleading statements or any violation of all applicable NCQA Marketing and Advertising Guidelines. Each organization agrees in advance to remedy such violation with the action deemed appropriate by NCQA.

## Special Situations

NCQA realizes that these guidelines may not address all potential marketing and advertising materials. In such instances, organizations should contact the NCQA Marketing department through [My NCQA](#) to discuss the proposed marketing/advertising activity and associated marketing and/or advertising materials to achieve outcomes consistent with the spirit of these guidelines.

NCQA will respond to complaints regarding inaccurate and/or misleading advertising materials by our customers and their affiliates. Such complaints could initiate an audit of an organization's materials outside of the regular audit process.

# Advertising and Marketing Guidelines: Managed Behavioral Health Organization Accreditation

---



HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).